



Has the final countdown to wildlife extinction in Northern Central African Republic begun?

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Mots-clés	aerial survey [11], illegal bushmeat trade [12], illegal ivory trade [13], Northern Central African Republic [14], wildlife decline [15], wildlife population trend [16]
Résumé en anglais	<p>The wildlife populations of Northern Central African Republic experienced precipitous declines during the 1970s and 1980s. While anecdotes coming out of the region indicate that the wildlife populations remain under serious threat, little is known about their status. An aerial sample count was carried out in the Northern Central African Republic at the end of the dry season in June 2005 and covered an 85,000 km² complex landscape containing national parks, hunting reserves and community hunting areas. Results show a dramatic decline of wildlife since the previous survey in 1985. In 20 years, large mammals' numbers decreased by 65%, probably because of poaching and diseases brought by illegal cattle transhumance. Elephant (<i>Loxodonta africana</i>) and Buffon kob (<i>Kobus kob</i>) populations showed the greatest decline (over 80% each), while buffalo (<i>Syncerus caffer</i>), roan antelope (<i>Hippotragus equinus</i>) and Giant Lord's Derby Eland (<i>Taurotragus derbianus</i>) populations seem stable or increasing over these last 20 years. The analysis of the wildlife population distribution by status of the different types of protected areas (national parks, hunting areas) showed that individual encounter rates of elephant and buffalo were lower in national parks than in neighbouring hunting areas, while those for roan, giraffe (<i>Giraffa camelopardalis</i>) and Buffon kob were higher in the national parks.</p>
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